

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Statement by Congresswoman Mazie K. Hirono of Hawaii
in the U.S. House of Representatives
in Support of H.R. 4 Requiring the Department of Health and Human Services
to Negotiate for Lower Prescription Drug Prices
January 12, 2007

Madame Speaker,

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4.

Talk about an all-American concept – using our purchasing power to lower our costs – something big companies do all the time.

This is why I am so pleased that one of the first pieces of legislation the 110th Congress is considering will help our seniors – our kupuna, as we say in Hawaii – lower their prescription drug costs.

I am proud to say that in 2002 Hawaii enacted a law creating a similar program to allow negotiating for lower prescription drug costs.

Thousands of American families spent countless hours studying the Medicare Part D options. My family was one of those. I sat with my 82 year old mother as we worked our way through the confusing plans.

Unfortunately, many of those families' efforts were not rewarded with the desired outcome: affordable prescription drugs. America can do better for its seniors. By giving Medicare negotiating authority we will take an important step in the right direction.

Mahalo.